



CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS: The Candy Cane is one of the most familiar symbols of Christmas. It dates back to 1670 in Europe but didn't appear in the U.S. until the 1800s. The treat we see today, where the shape is Jesus's hook to shepherd his lambs and the color and stripes hold significance for purity and Christ's sacrifice, became common in the mid 1900s.



GAZEBOEXPRESS

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENT SOURCE FOR THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND • DECEMBER 2014

NEW TOWN COUNCILMAN

Longtime steelworker tapped to fill Highland Town Council post



Steve Wagner is a familiar face in a new position.

Wagner, Highland's new Town Councilman, was selected by the Highland Democratic Precinct Organization Nov. 25 to fill the unexpired term of Councilman Dennis

Adams, who succumbed to cancer Nov. 3. By law, vacancies in elected positions must be filled within 30 days.

The married father of two is prepared to hit the ground running, continuing the work started by Adams. "I am eager to step up and participate at a higher level than I have in the past," Wagner said moments after he was named Town Councilman.

"I am excited about working with the members of the current Town Council," he said. "This is a good group and I look forward to continuing the trend of making improvements in town."

As a newlywed, Wagner and his wife, Janet, moved to Highland in 1979 from Chicago. The couple have two grown children, Amy and Steven, and four grandchildren.

The longtime steelworker has served four terms as vice president United Steelworkers Local 1010. For the last 14 years, Wagner has also been a member of the Highland Board of Zoning Appeals. 🐾

INSIDE: Town Councilman Dennis Adams made an indelible mark on the community through his life and service to Highland. **FULL STORY, PAGE 2**

GOVERNING COMMISSION TO OVERSEE THEATRE

Highland will welcome 2015 with a new commission and a solid plan to get the Town Theatre marquis blazing once again.

The Town Council and Redevelopment Commission have agreed on a theatre governing commission made up of seven to nine individuals who will oversee the exterior restoration and interior rehabilitation of the vintage structure.

Councilman Dan Vassar said members of the theatre board will be announced and meet at least twice monthly beginning in January.

"We are blessed with an abundance of talented, generous individuals who want to see this project come to fruition," Vassar said. "The group we are bringing together have the skillsets to oversee the

construction, create a governing structure as well as seek grants and donations."

Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro said she is heartened by the community's response to the request for volunteers. "We have more than 200 individuals who are willing to donate four hours or more per month," she said. "Some people want to pop popcorn. Others have volunteered to sell tickets. We have a place for everyone."

Vassar and Petro are optimistic that the Town will reopen for business in late fall 2015. 🐾

INSIDE: Fund-raising efforts are already bringing in donations to help restore the historic town theatre. **FULL STORY, PAGE 3**



SNOW REMOVAL PLAN

It is only a matter of time before we all get walloped with snow and ice. Check out the Snow and Ice Control Operations Plan insert inside this month's water bill for details on how you can help keep Highland's streets safer this winter.

DRIVE TIME HIGHLAND

Phoenix-based Drive Time, which specializes in selling late-model used vehicles, is opening in March in the former Abrahamson Chrysler dealership, 9850 Indianapolis Blvd. In exchange for a 10-year tax abatement, the company has said it will hire at least 25 people and complete up to \$500,000 in improvements.

WICKER PARK ROCKS!

Wicker Memorial Park is a rock star thanks to Windy City Live. Turns out WCL's Producer David Plummer moved with his wife and two children to Highland to take advantage of all the community has to offer. Plummer named Wicker Memorial Park as one of the features he loves most on his installment of a new segment titled, "My Hometown." Check it out at <http://windycitylive.com/episodes/My-Hometown-kicks-off-in-NWIndiana/9544069>.

OFFICE UP FOR GRABS

The office on the former Darnell's Auto Repair shop at 2821 Jewett Ave. is free-for-the asking to anyone who can safely remove the building from the site.

If an interested party comes forward, it will mark the second time the building has been moved. Constructed as the 45th Avenue branch of the Bank of Highland, the building was acquired by Dave Darnell, longtime owner of the business and moved to the Jewett Avenue location when a larger bank building was constructed.

MOPED REGULATIONS

Beginning Jan. 1, moped operators must register their vehicles through the BMV instead of the police department.

A registration fee of \$26.35 will be assessed along with a \$10 excise fee. Owners must present an unexpired Indiana identification card with a Motor Driven Cycle B Endorsement or valid unexpired permit or drivers license.

MORE INFO: www.in.gov/bmv



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NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

Send your suggestions to:
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The Gazebo Express is produced by:

The Idea Factory • (219) 779-9041
www.theideafactory.us.com

Printed by CJ Printing
9445 Indianapolis Blvd. ® 94
Highland, IN 46322

DENNIS S. ADAMS: 1944 - 2014

"Dennis liked to help people and the council gave him an opportunity to do just that"

From the moment Dennis Adams was selected to become a Town Councilman, his widow, Jo Lynn, said he was proud and eager to make a difference.

"Dennis like to help people and the council gave him an opportunity to do just that," she said. "If a resident had a question, a problem or a complaint, Dennis was there to help. He always wanted to get things done – yesterday. When people called, Dennis was quick to call them back and take care of what he could."

Six months into his term, Adams, 70, developed what he thought was a flu while the couple was vacationing at their Michigan cottage. A trip to a local emergency department was followed by a diagnosis of cancer.

Jo Lynn said her husband never gave up.

"He never stopped being a Town Councilman," she said. "It was a job he loved, one he was really comfortable doing. It was his nature and it suited him. He liked helping to make decisions and communicating what the town was doing. Dennis loved being the council liaison for the new police department and was so proud and pleased that he was



well enough to attend the groundbreaking."

Council President Dan Vassar said Adams left an indelible mark on the council and community. "Dennis always told you exactly what he was thinking – and why," Vassar said. "He was a straight shooter and he was good councilman."

Dennis and Jo Lynn Adams are the parents of two adult children – Tammy and Nick – two grandchildren and one great-grandchild. 🌸

HIGHLAND POLICE WARN RESIDENTS OF SCAMS

A flurry of new scams are afoot and police want you to become familiar with them so you can protect yourself. At least one Highland resident has lost money and the department continues to take reports from other residents who have been affected.

IRS SCAM: An individual alleging to be from the Internal Revenue Service alleges you owes taxes and demands payment. More information on this scam is available at www.irs.gov.

SPOOFING CALLER ID: In this scam, a caller falsifies the phone number that appears on your caller ID. The caller pretends to be someone in authority, such as a local sheriff's office, saying there is a warrant for your arrest and demanding payment.

GRANDMA SCAM: The caller claims to be a family member in need asking for money. Ask the caller for information only your family would know. Then, call the person requesting the money to verify they were the caller.

SWEEPSTAKES/LOTTERY: Callers claim you have won a large sum of money and asking for bank information to deposit the winnings. Never provide banking information to anyone you do not know.

HOME INVASION: Teams arrive offering to do yard work or home repairs. They lure the homeowner away from the house to allow others to enter the house. Other times, they may arrive asking to use the phone. 🌸

FITNESS RESOLUTIONS

If 2015 is the year you've decided to get serious about fitness, there are a bounty of choices to help you get there.

Save the cost of initiation when you join the Fitness Center at Lincoln Community Center between Dec. 9 and Jan. 19 and get access to some of the best fitness equipment around. If you have a hard time squeezing exercise in during the holidays, the park department also offers a host of mini fitness classes in December. The minis offer the same great instructors and workout but are just two weeks long from December 8 through 17.

MORNING AEROBICS

Sign up for 30 minutes or a full hour of cardio exercise combined with stretching and strength training. **M T W T H**

SIT AND BE FIT

This class is perfect for those with limited mobility or balance issues. **T T H ONLY**

YOGALATES

This blend of yoga and pilates merges the meditation and stress relief poses of yoga with the core tightening and body strengthening of pilates. **M W ONLY**

INFO: Learn more about these and other fitness programs at www.highlandparks.org.

REMEMBER: The municipal bike paths and those at Wicker Memorial Park remain open throughout the winter season.

NO INITIATION FEE

Join the Fitness Center at Lincoln Community Center between Dec. 9 and Jan. 19, and pay no initiation fee. That's a savings of \$30 to \$45. Can't do it alone? The center also offers personal training for an affordable fee.

FREE ORIENTATION

Learn proper ways to use the equipment and obtain guidelines for a safe workout.

WHEN: 6 p.m. January 6

WHERE: LCC Fitness Center

NOTE: Must be a Fitness Center member. Scan ID upon arrival. Non-members are welcome to drop in any time for a tour.

ACTIVITY CODE: 300030

INFO: Call (219) 838-0114 or www.highlandparks.org.



HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

'Tis the season when crime can flourish. Police Chief Pete Hojnicky says there are things each of us can do to protect ourselves and our property during the upcoming holidays.

IF YOU ARE ON VACATION ...

- ❖ Put lights, radios and TVs on timers when leaving for an extended time.
- ❖ Make arrangements for your mail and newspapers to be picked up.
- ❖ Have someone shovel your driveway and walkways.
- ❖ Contact the police non-emergency number at (219) 838-3184 to put your residence on a vacation checklist while you are out of town.

IF YOU ARE AWAY FROM HOME ...

- ❖ Take in your trash cans or your neighbor's trash cans as soon as possible.

IF YOU ARE SHOPPING ...

- ❖ Shop with friends or family.
- ❖ Do not carry large sums of money or all of your credit cards.
- ❖ Be vigilant and aware of your surroundings at all times. Carry your purse close to your body and never leave it unattended.
- ❖ Park in a well-lit parking lot.
- ❖ Lock your vehicle.
- ❖ Store valuables in the trunk.
- ❖ Remove any valuables from the interior of your vehicle, such as coins, radar detectors or GPS units.
- ❖ Be aware of suspicious people who approach you asking for personal information or those who tell you they just found a large sum of money and need your help.

REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

Residents are asked to immediately report suspicious people, behavior or vehicles to police by calling 911.

GIRLS ON THE RUN RAISES MONEY FOR HISTORIC TOWN THEATRE

Local history will show the cinema classic, "Free Birds" was the movie that changed it all for the Town Theatre.

The animated film raised \$255 for the renovation of the vintage movie house when it was shown at Southridge Elementary in November and marked the first-ever fund-raiser for the building.

Organized by 17 members of Girls on the Run of Northwest Indiana, the event attracted 98 elementary school children, who enjoyed

intermission ala The Town where they noshed on a marble convection compliments of Cakes by Karen.

"We are so very appreciate of the efforts of Girls on the Run and their coach Jane Kuva for taking it upon themselves to do what they could to help pay for the construction," Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro said.

"It's events like the one at Southridge that remind us that this theatre will be a legacy for these children and their families." 🍷

CULVER'S FUND-RAISER

Treat the family to dinner and dessert at Culver's and 10 percent of your purchase will be donated to the Town Theatre. Simply fill out a fund-raising flyer - available at the restaurant and online at www.highland.in.gov.

WHEN: 4 to 10 p.m. Tuesday, **DEC. 16**

WHERE: Culver's, 3950 Ridge Road

INFO: (219) 934-2212

HOME DECORATING CONTEST

Decorate your home for the holidays and you could be eligible for cash prizes. Enter the contest and let your Park Board be the judge of the best decorated homes. Highland residents only please. Entry forms available at Lincoln Center.

ENTRY DEADLINE: December 7

JUDGING: December 11

AWARDS: Announced December 13

INFO: www.highlandparks.org.

**A CHRISTMAS MEMORY**

Celebrate the magic of the season with "Truman Capote's A Christmas Memory: A New Musical Adaptation."

WHEN: Now through December 14

WHERE: The Theatre at the Center, 1040 Ridge Road, Munster

INFO: www.theatreatthecenter.com.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Enjoy the sounds of the season at the Community Band's annual Christmas concert. The group will be collecting paper products and cleaning supplies for the Highland Emergency Fund.

WHEN: 7 p.m. December 18

WHERE: Highland High School Monbeck Auditorium

WANT TO JOIN US? Email Director Greg Jasek at maestroflute@att.net.

**CHRISTMAS STORY EXHIBIT**

"A Christmas Story" exhibit features the original Macy's window displays from the popular holiday movie.

WHEN: Now through January 4

WHERE: Indiana Welcome Center, 7770 Corinne Dr., Hammond

INFO: www.southshorecva.com

NEW YEAR'S EVE FIREWORKS

Ring in the new year with a spectacular fireworks display at Main Square Park. Bring the family to enjoy the midnight show. Hot chocolate will be served.

WHEN: Midnight December 31

WHERE: Main Square Park

INFO: www.highlandparks.org.

**TWELFTH NIGHT CELEBRATION**

The Holiday Festival of Lights will close with a Twelfth Night celebration. Bring your Christmas trees to Main Square to light up the night. Hot chocolate will be served to warm your hearts and toes.

WHEN: 6 p.m. January 6

WHERE: Main Square Park

INFO: www.highlandparks.org.



HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS